

ICYMI: Governor Carney Delivers 2021 State of the State Address

DOVER, Del. – Governor John Carney on Tuesday delivered his 2021 State of the State address virtually. *ICYMI: Rewatch Governor Carney's State of the State address on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [de.gov/sots](#).*

*"Over the past year Delawareans have worked hard, kept our focus, strengthened our resolve, and looked out for one another," said **Governor Carney**. "As a result of the good work of so many, I stand here confidently, proudly, and gratefully to tell you that the state of our state is resilient. It's determined. It's strong. And it is getting stronger."*

[Click here](#) to read the full address, as prepared for delivery.

[Click here](#) to view photos from the event.

The following are excerpts from Governor Carney's remarks:

A strong economy

"When I stood in this chamber one year ago, we had a \$200 million surplus. By April, the economic downturn, brought on by the pandemic, had wiped out that surplus. And like every state in the country, we faced a looming deficit. But unlike most other states, Delaware was ready. With your help, we spent the previous three years getting ready. With many of you, I hosted town hall meetings in communities across our state. We promised to build a long-term, sustainable budget. A budget that would work for Delaware families. And we kept that promise. We built up our reserves – while making investments where needed the most. When the COVID-19 crisis hit, we

balanced our budget without cutting critical services. Without raising taxes on Delaware families or businesses. Without borrowing money to pay our bills. And without laying off state employees or cutting their pay – as so many other states were forced to do.”

Ensuring our students get the education they need and deserve

“This past year has tested every aspect of our public school system. And I want to thank our educators, school nurses, school and district leaders, and every single person who works in our schools. They have met this challenge, and put the needs of their students above their own. I also want to thank the parents, who filled in the gaps and kept their students on track at home, often while juggling remote work of their own. My highest priority as Governor remains the same. We need to ensure our most vulnerable students get the education they need and deserve. Students who are living in poverty. Students who are still learning English.”

Committing to racial equality

“This year laid bare the pain that our brothers and sisters of color suffer across our state and nation. It took away any false sense of comfort we may have allowed ourselves to feel that everyone has equal access to the American Dream. We have much work to do as a state and as a nation. First to heal. But to go beyond healing. To make fundamental changes to a system that for too long has denied the promise of equality and justice for all. This requires a comprehensive approach. To the relationship between law enforcement and communities of color. But also to economic empowerment, education, and issues of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.”

Protecting the environment

“A critical part of making life better for Delawareans is protecting our environment. Last year, the legislative session was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as we know. But I made a promise to my friend, and former Senator Harris McDowell. I promised we would put the finishing touch on his legacy here in the legislature and set a Renewable Portfolio Standard this year. And so with your help, we will set a new goal that 40 percent of Delaware’s energy will come from renewable sources by 2035.”

Beating the COVID-19 pandemic

“Over the course of my 30 years in public service, and even during the course of this administration, I have seen government tackle countless, serious and complicated challenges. Nothing – absolutely nothing – compares to the last ten months. There are state employees in every corner of this government who have been asked to solve unimaginable problems, work punishing hours, and put themselves in harm’s way, to help us get through this pandemic.”

Safeguarding our democracy

“One of the most important things we did during this pandemic was safeguard our democracy. With the General Assembly’s help, we allowed mail-in voting for the first time. That meant hundreds of thousands of Delawareans could stay safe from the pandemic, while exercising their right to vote. And I look forward to signing legislation to make mail-in voting a permanent feature of our elections – from school board and town hall elections to the election for the President of the United States. Governments at all levels made it possible for public meetings, hearings and proceedings to be conducted virtually during the pandemic. In many cases it’s made conducting the public’s business more accessible, more

transparent, and more efficient. We should all want more people to participate in our democracy – not fewer. So we should work together to make these practices permanent even after the pandemic.”

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